IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1 to 39 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter and add new Claims 40 to 61 as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. to 39. (Canceled)

40. (New) A software distributing system for distributing control software used by an image forming apparatus to an external apparatus via a network comprising:

a receiving unit configured to receive lot information which is stored in a memory of a consumable unit detachably located in an image forming apparatus and which is output by the external apparatus; and

a controller unit configured to distribute a control software, based on the lot information, to the external apparatus via the network.

41. (New) The software distributing system according to Claim 40, wherein the lot information includes lots of respective parts making up the consumable unit, and wherein the controller unit is configured to select the control software based on a combination of lots of respective parts making up the consumable unit and is configured to distribute the control software selected by the controller unit.

42. (New) The software distributing system according to Claim 40, wherein the receiving unit is configured to receive operation information of the consumable unit, and further comprises a selecting unit configured to select a control

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software based on the lot information and the operation information received by the receiving unit; and

wherein the controller unit is configured to distribute the control software selected by the selecting unit to the external apparatus.

43. (New) The software distributing system according to Claim 40, wherein the lot information indicates production condition for the consumable unit.

44. (New) The software distributing system according to Claim 40, wherein the external apparatus is a computer connector with the image forming apparatus.

45. (New) A software distributing system for distributing control software used by an image forming apparatus to an external apparatus via a network comprising:

a receiving unit configured to receive identifying information and operating information of a consumable unit detachably located in an image forming apparatus, said information being output by the external apparatus;

a selecting unit configured to select a control software from plural different control software according to the combination of the identifying information and the operation information received by the receiving unit, wherein at least some of the plural different software are different depending on the combination of identifying information and operation information received by the receiving unit; and

a controller unit configured to distribute the control software, selected by the selecting unit, to the external apparatus via the network.

46. (New) A software distributing system according to Claim 45, wherein the identifying information includes lot information.

47. (New) A software distributing system according to Claim 46, wherein the lot information includes lots of respective parts making up the consumable unit, and wherein the selecting unit is configured to select the control software based on combinations of lots of respective parts making up the consumable unit, and wherein the controller unit is configured to distribute the control software selected by the selecting unit.

48. (New) A software distributing system according to Claim 45, wherein the consumable unit includes a photoconductor and toner.

49. (New) A software distributing system according to Claim 46, wherein the lot information indicates production condition for the consumable unit.

50. (New) A information processing method for distributing control software used by an image forming apparatus to an external apparatus via a network comprising:

a receiving step which receives lot information which is stored in a memory of a consumable unit detachably located in an image forming apparatus and which is output by the external apparatus; and

a controlling step which distributes a control software, based on the lot information, to an external apparatus via the network.

51. (New) The method according to claim 50, wherein the lot information includes lots of respective parts making up the consumable unit, and wherein the controlling step selects the control software based on a combination of lots of respective parts making up the consumable unit and distributes the control software selected by the controlling step.

52. (New) The method according to claim 50, wherein the receiving step receives operation information of the consumable unit, and further comprising a selecting step which selects a control software, based on the lot information and the operation information received by the receiving step; and

wherein the controlling step distributes the control software selected by the selecting step to the external apparatus.

53. (New) The method according to claim 50, wherein the lot information indicates production condition for the consumable unit.

54. (New) The method according to claim 50, wherein the external apparatus is a computer connector with the image forming apparatus.

55. (New) An information processing method for distributing control software used by an image forming apparatus to an external apparatus via a network comprising:

a receiving step which receives identifying information and operating

information of a consumable unit detachably located in an image forming apparatus, said

information being output by the external apparatus;

a selecting step which selects a control software from plural different control

software according to the combination of the identifying information and the operation

information received by the receiving step, wherein at least some of the plural different

software are different depending on the combination of identifying information and

operation information received by the receiving step; and

a controlling step which distributes the control software, selected by the

selecting step, to the external apparatus via the network.

56. (New) The method according to claim 55, wherein the identifying

information includes lot information.

57. (New) The method according to claim 56, wherein the lot information

includes lots of respective parts making up the consumable unit, and wherein the selecting

step selects the control software based on combination of lots of respective parts making up

the consumable unit, and the controlling step distributes the control software selected by

the selecting step.

58. (New) The method according to claim 55, wherein the consumable unit

includes a photoconductor and toner.

59. (New) The method according to claim 56, wherein the lot information indicates production condition for the consumable unit.

60. (New) The method of Claim 50, wherein a computer-executable program stored on a computer-readable medium causes a computer to execute said information processing method.

61. (New) The method of Claim 55, wherein a computer-executable program stored on a computer-readable medium causes a computer to execute said information processing method.